



## Mills Oakley recruits leading blockchain & cryptocurrency expert

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National law firm Mills Oakley has enhanced its innovation and technology credentials with the hire of Special Counsel **Joni Pirovich** in Melbourne.

Ms Pirovich was previously head of the Blockchain and Cryptocurrency Tax Team at Hall & Wilcox. A tax expert with experience in corporate tax, R&D, GST, land tax, and stamp duty, Joni is particularly well regarded for her expertise in advising on the tax implications of blockchain projects and digital assets for individuals, corporates, joint ventures, exchanges and investment funds.

Joni advised on the tax aspects of Australia's first token offer by a cryptocurrency exchange, including the world's first detailed tax disclosure in a whitepaper. She is a sought after public speaker on blockchain and cryptocurrency and was a key driver of innovation and technology initiatives at her previous firm.

Joni is a strong advocate for female founders and women in start-ups, especially in the legal and technology sectors. She was recently invited by FinTech Australia to lead a member consultation process on the obstacles to female participation in the sector and how the Federal Government's newly announced \$18m Boosting Female Founders Initiative could be optimally designed to support women's economic participation in the workforce.

Mills Oakley CEO John Nerurker said that the firm would be a direct beneficiary of Joni's deep knowledge in this area: "Joni's insights into gender diversity will be invaluable given our focus on increasing the number of women in senior leadership roles at Mills Oakley and the launch of our newly revamped Diversity and Inclusion Committee," he observed.

This hire is also consistent with Mills Oakley's long-standing focus on technology and innovation. Over the past three years, Mills Oakley has launched Australia's first legal services Accelerator, won ALPMA's Thought Leadership Award, launched a second Accelerator and invested in a number of promising legal technology start-ups.

"In Joni, we are gaining not only a respected tax practitioner, but someone with a track record for thought leadership in the blockchain and cryptocurrency space and a genuine passion for innovation. We are fortunate to make a hire so closely aligned with MO's strategic goals in multiple areas," Mr Nerurker concluded.

Joni said that she was looking forward to making a contribution to the firm's digital strategy:

"Australia needs law firms that are digitally literate. Change is occurring quickly and I am looking forward to playing a part in the cutting-edge work which is occurring at Mills Oakley to build digital capabilities, technology infrastructure and partnerships and a future-fit business strategy – and particularly calcifying a strong digital backbone across each practice in the firm" she said.

Joni will be working with partner Andrew Spalding to service clients in the Melbourne Private Advisory team. She commences with Mills Oakley today.

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